

USS HUGH PURVIS (DD 709)  
Fleet Post Office  
FPO New York, 09501

14 August 1968

Dear Family and Friends of the HUGH PURVIS,

On the eve of HUGH PURVIS deployment to the Pacific Fleet I consider it appropriate to review with you some of the highlights of the past year and convey some information which should help you plan for the coming months.

1968 has been an eventful year in the life of the HUGH PURVIS and her fine crew. January found us in the Boston Naval Shipyard, being prepared for the oncoming operational deployment. Leaving the shipyard in March we proceeded to our homeport and thence to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, which was to be our base of operations for six weeks during refresher training. While in the Caribbean we were able to visit Kingston, Jamaica and St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, which proved to be an interesting change of scene. Completing refresher training in May, we began the return voyage north.

On May 12th, we arrived in Newport for reunion with family and friends. During the next two weeks we prepared for and were given a combined Administrative and Material Inspection. On May 27th we left Newport with U. S. Naval Destroyer School student officers embarked for what we thought would be a week of student drills. On this same day we were ordered to the Norfolk, Virginia area to take part in the search for the missing submarine, USS SCORPION (SSN 589). We were detached from the search on May 29th and returned to Newport. After a week in port we again went to the Norfolk area to continue the Destroyer School cruise returning to Newport on May 22nd. During the following week the HUGH PURVIS conducted competitive exercises to qualify for the Battle Efficiency "E" and departmental excellence awards. From June 28th until July 5th we took part in Independence Day festivities at Bristol, Rhode Island.

I am happy to inform you that we have recently learned that HUGH PURVIS has been awarded the Battle Efficiency "E" for the second consecutive year. In addition the Operations Department was awarded a departmental award for excellence.

We are presently in Newport making final preparations for the cruise which will begin on August 22nd and end in early April. These preparations include both the material readiness of the ship and the proper arrangement of our personal affairs. It is this subject of personal affairs which I would like to discuss in slightly greater detail with you.

As you all know we will be at sea where we will not be easily accessible by mail and telephone. If it should become necessary for you to contact your sons, husbands, or brothers immediately in the coming months you can do so by a telegram addressed to the USS HUGH PURVIS (DD 709) in care of the Naval Communications Station, Washington, D. C. Your message will then be relayed to the ship as fast as conditions permit.

It is also important that you understand the Navy's position concerning emergency leave which is as follows.

"Emergency leave is to be granted only when there exists within the person's household or immediate family an emergency situation which will be resolved or alleviated by the person's presence.

Emergency situations:

- a. Impending death, or death of a member of the immediate family; i.e. parents, children, wife, etc.
- b. Accident to or serious illness of a member of a serviceman's immediate family resulting in a serious family problem and imposing important responsibilities on him which must be met immediately and cannot be accomplished from his duty station or by any other individual or means.

The request for verification should be initiated by the serviceman's family through the Red Cross."

Therefore, your first move in the case of serious illness or family crisis should be to inform the Red Cross. I must caution you to provide the Red Cross with full details of the emergency; this will prevent wondering and anxiety on the part of those of us at sea.

In case of unexpected crises the Red Cross and Navy Relief Society may also be able to provide quick assistance, financial or otherwise. The Relief Society has compiled a fine record of aiding Navy men and their families over the years.

Mail is also another topic of importance. "FPO San Francisco 96601" may be used for personal mail, but utilization of "FPO San Francisco 96601" for other than first class mail will result in an increased cost of postage to the sender when mailed from a point closer to New York. Fees are affixed on weight and distance between post office of mailing and post office of address. In this case use "FPO New York 09501" if you reside closer to New York.

We will be far from home during the coming months, but we will take pride and satisfaction from the knowledge that our very absence makes possible the safety and security of our homes and families. We are performing the most important of jobs. I am proud of the HUGH PURVIS and I am proud of you, our friends and family, for I realize that our mission could not have been so well performed without the solid basis of your support and understanding. I extend to you, therefore, my heartfelt thanks for helping make our past and future duties possible. I personally regret that we will not be able to be at home, with the ones we love during the coming months. You

may be sure, however, that you will remain ever in our thoughts, and that the HUGH PURVIS by her presence as a strong unit of the Pacific Fleet will be making significant contributions to peace in Asia, and the security of our American homeland, a matter most vital and a cause we are proud to serve.



C. W. TAYLOR  
Commander, U.S. NAVY  
COMMANDING OFFICER  
USS HUGH PURVIS (DD 709)